

Defendant's Exhibit 513

LIVING

This 100-pound, stone-carved Birkin bag is still cheaper than the real thing

By Faran Krentcil

September 4, 2016 5:10am



Barbara Segal's "Black Candy" stone Birkin bag.
Angel Chevreton

MORE ON: BIRKIN BAGS

The secret reasons why rich women resell their castoff luxury goods

Demand for Hermes bags is booming despite the pandemic

Hermès Birkin bags are being cut up to make \$76K Birkenstock sandals

Barbara Segal's handbags are so heavy, they would give any chiropractor a fit.

"You can't carry them around," the Yonkers artist says, "but so many women with Birkins just stare at [their bags]."

"They'll say, 'My bag is a work of art.' Mine, too!"

Segal carves her 100-pound versions of the Birkin — the iconic Hermès tote — out of stone like orange calcite. "[Stone] transforms it into an almost religious item of worship," she says. "It's turning [the Birkin] into a historical relic."

EXHIBIT

@ 16
8/30/22

8/30/22, 12:52 AM

Rapper Saweetie says real men should buy their women Birkins

Segal, a graduate of Pratt, got her start making product models for Avon Cosmetics in the 1980s. "I learned how to do [perfume] bottles with incredible precision, to a thousandth of an inch," she says. "One day, I thought, 'I bet I could make a striped shirt out of stone.'"

Segal next focused on bags — first Chanel's quilted classics, then Hermès' iconic totes.

Her biggest challenge? Authenticity. Thanks to Hermès' notoriously elusive Birkin policies, Segal couldn't find a bag, much less afford one. "They won't even let you hold one in the store!" she exclaims. "Fortunately, the Internet is an amazing place," she says, citing Malleries.com, a secondhand marketplace, as a trusted source for Birkin dimensions and high-resolution photos.

Her "bags" are true to size and bear immaculate detailing, including the status tote's signature leather folds, tight stitching and even the lock — which she carves from the same rock as the bags, then paints in metallic shades.

Segal acquires material from quarries all over the world — from the Grand Canyon region to Iran — and uses traditional carving tools, including chisels and stone cutters. A bag typically takes her three months to finish.

After she started tagging her Birkins on Instagram, galleries worldwide offered their services. Among them is Krause Gallery on the Lower East Side, which will display her "Black Candy" bag from Sept. 7 through Oct. 5 as part of its "Emerging to Established" group show.



Celebrities like Miranda Kerr love the Birkin bag.
SplashNews



Segal works on one of her stone Birkin in her studio in Yonkers.
Angel Chevrestt

1,000 — a hefty sum, but a real Birkin recently sold for more than \$300,000 at Christie's. (Bought new from Hermès, the bags reportedly go from \$12,000 to more than \$200,000, depending on materials and customization.)

The fashion industry's been biting. "I sold a Chanel piece to someone who works at Chanel," Segal, a professor at the School of Visual Arts, confirms.

She even created a 3-foot-tall Chanel bag, from white Utah marble, that weighs a literal ton. "Moving it from my studio was a major ordeal," she says. "It took four men."

As for her art bags trying to convey any message about consumerism, Segal demurs. "I'm not trying to say if it's good or bad — they're . . . beautiful!"